

A Little Sermon.

BY W. J. M. BAUMAN.

TEXT: Romans 8:4. "Let God be true but every man a liar." God demands our will. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Rom. 8:9. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of submission to the Father's will. "Not my will but thine be done." Luke 22:42. God claims the right to dictate. He cannot err. We may.

Men have opinions but when opinions are weighed in the balances every one of them may be found wanting. God does not want us to lie in the general sense of untruthfulness, but he does not want us to differ from him. Not only sometimes, but God always knows best. He wants us to have faith like Abraham had and go at his bidding whether our judgment dictates such a course as best or not. God knows best and he will see us through. When he tells us to have faith, it is our business to obey without arguing the case with him. When he tells us to repent we should simply obey by giving him our whole heart and service. When he tells us to be baptized, it is not for us to say or to inquire whether baptism is essential or not. It is our duty to obey and do just what God has told us to do. The same truth applies to feet-washing. "What I do thou knowest not know but thou shalt know hereafter." John 13:6. You just do what I have told you to do. I have washed your feet and now tell you to wash each other's feet. I know why I demand this of you and you just trust me and respect my authority without consulting your own feelings or opinions and when once I see proper I'll open your understandings and you "shall know even as you are known."

When God tells men to pray for what they need they should simply and trust fully do so and not manifest the spirit of a Naaman by saying, can't God bless me without my unceasingly petitioning him? God, for reasons of his own and no doubt reasons tending to our good, wants us to feel and be conscious of our dependence upon him. His demand is that men should "pray without ceasing." 1 Thes. 5:17. Let us pray. God demands that we should love our enemies and so of course we should not intentionally shoot them or take their lives in any other way. It is not for us to take issue with God by arguing that "the Romans will come and take our land and country," if we obey. It is for us to obey and leave the consequences with him. Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego manifested the right spirit in matters of this nature. We know they say that the God whom we serve can deliver us, but if he will not, know thou O King that we will not worship thine image. See Daniel 3:17, 18. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. 8:28.

Let us pray: O God grant us faith and strength to confide in thy commands at all times, under all circumstances, in all places. We are thine in life thine in death.

We often talk as though harm could come by obeying God. Is that faith? Will the God who kept Abraham safe, who upset the walls of Jericho when Joshua and his little army obeyed, who preserved Daniel in the lions den, and who also preserved Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego while in the fiery furnace (not a smell of fire was upon their garments) not stand by us?

God demands of us virtue, which means excellency of Christian character and the courage to manifest such a character at all times in all places under all circumstances. Radically, we should obey. God commands knowledge which means a clear and correct perception of facts. We should radically stick to facts regardless of consequences. God demands temperance and that too "in all things." Of course this means in all lawful things. Evil we are to eschew and abstain from its appearance. Patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness and charity all are found in the catalogue of God's commands. God demands the preaching of the gospel in the most radical sense possible and to make excuses in this matter impossible, he passed an ordinance that "they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel." See 1 Cor. 9 ch. In the same Christian trust, with the same consciousness that God knows better what is needed

than we do, this command *must* be obeyed or we fall short as we would in the violation of any other ordinance.

Christian success is only attained by strict conformity to Christian law. The Master says: "Without me ye can do nothing." The prophet teaches that success is not attained by human might, power or wisdom, "but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Preachers are to be sent. See Rom. 10:15. Paul argues that they are not to go on their charges. See 1 Cor. 9:7. He is not to be entangled with the affairs of this life. See 2 Tim. 2:4.

Hope none will be offended because of my allusion to this matter, like some are when we cite them to the commands on baptism or to the teaching of John 13. Should any be offended we cite them to Gal. 4:16. "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"

I have no compromise to offer on the matter. God is to be true and I a liar, so the text declares. In the position we occupy in this "little sermon," lies safety. I have not time nor space to allude to all God's commands. Suffice it to say, there is no promise in God's holy word, for salvation from sin unless men *obey*. If God will stretch his mercy beyond his promises I have no objections to offer. In all things, I aim at this for my motto, "Let God be true but every man a liar." It is said in God's law, "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." What God demands of us is *entire* consecration. We should treat those who may believe in and practice error, with respect, but to compromise with error, never, never, NEVER!

We are not to be "menpleasers." We are to "fear God and keep" (obey) "his commandments," without reservation.

Not long since a member of a church, the most bitter against the Brethren church, expressed a desire for compromise between us and them. My answer was "never." In the Brethren church there is privilege to obey God's whole law. Her door is always open and if your people wish to become members of the Brethren church we will heartily welcome you."

Brethren, our profession is right, radically right. It cannot be improved, but it is none too right.

May God bless us with the consistency that like as the prophet swallowed the whole "roll," we may practice the whole gospel.

Morrill, Kans.

The Best Excuse Worthless--Felix.

BY E. MASON.

The last resort of the convicted man is delay. "Go thy way for this time. When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." There is no attempt at self-defence. It is a confession of bondage, and who does not see through it? Would it be plainer if he had said, "I love my sins. What God and angels and good men despise, I love. I cannot break loose from them?"

It is an attempt to dodge the truth, and who does not understand it? He does not wait for the gospel of forgiveness. He cannot bear the law. His blanched lip, his startled stare, his trembling hands, declare it. He interrupts the divine message. "Go thy way for this time." If once he can silence that accusing voice, he will never call it up again. He that sent for Paul to hear him "concerning the faith in Christ." But he sent him away before he began to speak of Christ. "For this time," says Felix to his conscience; "Forever," to his will. He who dares not look at his sins will never see Christ as his Savior. Repentance is the only way to the cross.

This excuse is an insult to God, and who does not know it? Does it mean "I love righteousness; I only postpone obedience?" No. It means "I love sin. God's offer of pardon and peace I will put off as long as I can." Does it mean that his heart is less hardened than if he had deliberately dismissed the subject forever? No. True repentance seizes the opportunity with a feeling of relief. Conviction of sin does not bring one into the kingdom of God. Not how you fall into conviction, but how you escape it, determines the loss or the saving of the soul.

Ah, Felix! weak, cowardly, false Felix! your excuse is worse than nothing. On one side is a wall of righteousness; and you start back, for you are unrighteous. On the other is a wall of purity; and you start back, for you are impure. But before you, along this brack to which you are walled in, the judgment to come is swiftly approaching, and you must meet it. No wonder you tremble. But instead of calling on Christ for deliverance, you make yourself drunk with forgetfulness, and hold up your fading purple and trappings of office for admiration and applause.

My Lot In Life.

I am asked by a correspondent "why I am living so isolated." I shall not attempt an answer. Yet I desire to say, I find myself where I am, and as I am. My duty is submission. My privilege is enjoyment. Because I am "isolated" I need not be useless or unhappy. I accept my situation as of divine appointment, and I will try to be contented in it, no difference how great the mistake. Lamenting over the past will do no good; I cannot recall or change it. Complaining of the present will not mend it. It may make myself and others wretched. Anxiety about the future will not of itself make it any brighter.

My heavenly Father if he has not caused, has permitted things to be with me just as they are; but he knows what is best. I know he loves me. I will therefore leave all with him. No rebellion shall be cherished in my heart, and I will strive to prevent murmurs from escaping my lips.

My Savior has promised that his grace shall be sufficient for me. He will never leave me but be a present help in my time of need. Trusting in him, and committing all to him, as I am; I will do what I can. I will aim to make the place where my lot is cast, as bright and cheerful as possible, till I am permitted to go to my heavenly home.

It does me good to read of the earnestness and success of the Brethren in preaching the Gospel. Dear brethren not one of us could have remained within the G. B. body, without desisting in preaching the gospel: I sympathize much with the Dayton brethren. Surely such outward fruit of the G. B. shows most fully, that hungering and thirsting after righteousness, favor or the full image of God, in the souls of their brethren, has grown languid, and as their offences increase, will gradually die away. In all ages as the fruit of the Spirit withers away, the works of the flesh will again prevail, to the utter destruction, first of the power, and then of the very form of religion. These consequences are not imaginary, or built on mere conjectures, but on plain matter of fact; Nowhere on earth can there be a more useless and fleshly document found than the G. B. Encyclopedia.

It is a law, that he whose heart is full of love, openeth his mouth with wisdom, and in his lips there is the law of kindness. Conversely; he whose heart is full of prejudice, anger, suspicion, or any unkind temper, will surely open his mouth in a manner corresponding with the disposition of his mind. And here will arise anger, jealousy, envy, wrong tempers of every kind, and worst of all; these do not vent themselves merely in words, but push men continually to all kind of ungodly and unrighteous actions. A plentiful harvest of all the works of darkness may be expected to spring from this source; whereby, in the end, thousands of souls, and not a few of those who once walked in the light of God's countenance, may be turned from the way of peace, and finally drowned in everlasting perdition. I fully realize that I should be much happier if I had attained the character of a peacemaker, in the church of God.

Dear Brethren don't forget to pray for us. If I am not working in the ministry, I am glad that God's Word is not bound.

T. E. DAVIS.

Junction City, Aug. 2nd.

To do a kind act is the proof of a good man; not bragging about it, however, is the proof of a noble man.

The man who comes the nearest to being honest believes no one dishonest without cause.

Method is the right hand of business.